

Masonic Temple
East corner of Main and High (U.S. Route 1)
Streets
Belfast
Waldo County
Maine

HABS No. ME-104

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ME
14-BELF
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. ME-104

MASONIC TEMPLE

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Address: East corner of Main and High (U.S. Route 1) Streets, 14-Belfast, Waldo County, Maine.

Present Owner: Masonic Temple Association of Belfast.

Present Occupants: First floor: Merrill Trust Company and other stores.
Second Floor: Various offices.
Third and Fourth floors: Masonic Lodge.

Present Use: Bank, stores, offices, and Masonic Lodge.

Brief Statement of Significance: Built in the 1870's, this is one of the longest and more elaborately decorated buildings in Belfast.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. Original and subsequent owners: Masonic Temple Association of Belfast, only.

2. Date of erection: Previous building used by the Masons burned May 24, 1875.
Masonic Temple Association of Belfast incorporated for building the new building in 1876.
Property for the new building procured in 1877 for \$7,500.
Ground broken June 1877.
Building completed in 1878 at a total cost, including land, of \$35,000.
Dedicated July 4, 1879.

3. Architect: George M. Harding, of Boston.

4. Builders: Israel Wood Parker, builder; Charles Henry Bray, master of brickwork.

5. Notes on alterations: The ground floor has been re-modeled for the various stores that have used it.

6. Sources of information: Joseph Williamson and Alfred Johnson, History of the City of Belfast in the State of Maine, Volume II (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1913), p. 255, illustration facing p. 254.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural character: This is a three-and-a-half-story brick building with masonry trim, typical of the 1870's.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Technical Description of Exterior

1. Over-all dimensions: 83-1/2' on High Street (southwest side), 54' on Main Street (northwest side), three-and-a-half stories with a four-story tower at the west corner.
2. Foundations: Granite.
3. Wall construction: Brick with freestone trim.
4. Chimneys: Brick chimneys, inconspicuous.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doors and doorways: Modern doors to first floor shops. Doorway to main stair to upper floors on southwest side, double doors, lighted upper halves, board lower parts with pattern of V grooves, elaborate doorway of carved and turned members.
 - b. Windows: Double hung windows on upper floors, two-light sash.
6. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Mansard roof with asphalt shingles.
 - b. Cornice: Brick cornice with corbeled brackets.
 - c. Dormers: Dormers in mansard roof with single or paired windows. Corner tower has steep pitched roof with battlemented cresting.

C. Technical Description of Interior

1. Floor plans: Stores on first floor opening from the sidewalk. Main doorway on the southwest side leads to main stairway to second floor; second floor offices open off central hall. Masonic lodge rooms on third and fourth floors. Masonic hall at southwest end of the building on third floor--46-1/2' x 40-1/2' x 21-1/2' high.
2. Stairways: Wide, enclosed, straight run stairway to second floor, marble treads, paneled wainscot. Double doors with stained glass panels lead to stairs to lodge rooms from the second floor.

3. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster. Wainscot of vertical boards with beaded edge.

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4. Trim: Heavy, molded and carved wood trim, stained dark and varnished. Molded plaster ceiling cornices. Trompe l'oeil paintings in the third floor hall.

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5. Lighting: Electric.

6. Heating: Building originally equipped with water, steam and gas.

D. Site: The building is at the east corner of Main and High Streets, the center of the business district of Belfast.

Prepared by Osmund R. Overby, Architect
National Park Service
August 1962.